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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR THE GAMBIA

Note by the Administrator

I. PROCESS OF THE PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

1. The programming exercise started with the preparation of the Advisory Note by which the UNDP Resident Representative in the Gambia invited the Government to a dialogue on the new country programme. The Note was reviewed and approved by the Government.
2. The recommendations of the mid-term review of the fourth country programme contributed towards a more precise focusing of the new programme. It was recognized that the new programme should adopt a more programmatic approach in order to better respond to national development priorities.
3. The round-table conference of December 1990, during which the National Programme for Sustained Development was submitted to the donor community, and the preparation of the follow-up sectoral consultations, have played important roles in the formulation of the Government's policies and objectives and the subsequent design of the country programme.
4. In addition, a number of programming initiatives have helped ensure better linkages between national development strategies and the country programme. These include the National Conference on Economic Management and Statistics, the sectoral reviews and the National Conferences on Horticultural and Livestock Policy, the preparation of the Gambian Environmental Action Plan, UNDP/NGO workshops and seminars on private sector promotion.

5. The country programme takes into account the priorities for technical cooperation outlined in the Government's Technical Cooperation Policy Framework Paper deriving from the national technical cooperation assessment and programme (NatCAP) exercise.

6. During the programming process, a continued dialogue was sustained between the government coordinating authority, the Office of the President and UNDP. The design of the country programme was coordinated with the formulation of national development strategies and programmes. Through a series of consultations on programming matters, complementarity was achieved between the UNDP country programme, the interventions planned by the participating agencies in the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) and the UNDP-administered funds, and technical cooperation programmes of the major bilateral and multilateral donor institutions intervening in the country.

7. The Government's Programme for Sustained Development provides the general framework for UNDP intervention during the fifth cycle. The present country programme proposes a coherent set of interventions in support of national programmes. It focuses on critical development problems of the country and is clearly oriented towards capacity-building and poverty alleviation.

II. ANALYTICAL COMMENTARY ON THE FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

8. In line with the programme approach as defined by General Assembly resolution 44/211 of _____, the proposed UNDP cooperation will focus on three priority programme themes: agricultural diversification and natural resources management; economic management; and poverty alleviation. The three themes focus on areas where UNDP technical cooperation could best contribute to the attainment of the national goals, as expressed in the national Programme for Sustained Development.

9. For the first theme, agricultural diversification and natural resources management, UNDP will support three interrelated national programmes: the Gambian Environmental Action Plan and the National Horticulture and Livestock Development Programmes. UNDP support would first help to strengthen the institutional capacity of the national structures responsible for the implementation of these programmes and for the coordination of other donors' participation, including that of NGOs; second, it would provide effective support to farmers with respect to land tenure issues, access of women to land, rural financing schemes, market opportunities and women's role in agriculture production; third, it would promote the use of appropriate technologies to enhance environmental protection. UNDP cooperation in regard to this first theme aims at protection of the environment and better management of natural resources, as well as at improving the living standards of rural communities.

10. For the second theme, economic management, UNDP will be a major partner in the implementation of the Economic Management Capacity-Building Programme which aims at strengthening the central economic and financial institutions in the country and the planning units of the major sectoral ministries. The

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efforts should lead to better design, implementation and evaluation of national macroeconomic and financial policies, to a higher implementation rate of the Public Investment Programme and to the necessary support of private sector promotion.

11. For the third theme, poverty alleviation, the key government objectives are the protection of the most vulnerable groups of the population - including young people, the urban and rural poor and the unemployed - and the provision of means by which people can escape from the bonds of poverty. UNDP will be involved with the design and the implementation of a comprehensive National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation and with the design and monitoring of human development profiles. In addition, UNDP will focus on two components: population and health; and vocational training and small-scale enterprise development, with special attention to the informal sector. More specifically, UNDP cooperation aims at strengthening the health and vocational training policy and planning systems; at supporting the National Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) Control programme; at increasing the access of poor people to education, health services, technology, credit, skills development and employment with special emphasis on the needs of women.

12. The choice of the three areas of concentration for UNDP cooperation is in line with Governing Council decision 90/34 of 23 June 1990, especially with reference to the recommended themes of poverty eradication and grass-roots participation in development; environmental problems and natural resources management; management development; and women in development. The promotion of human development is a general concern of the country programme.

III. MANAGEMENT OF THE FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

13. The programme approach calls for strengthened management and monitoring of programme implementation and for UNDP cooperation fully integrated into the national development strategy. This will be possible only with the Government's assumption of a leading role in the management of the programme. It is expected that, throughout the fifth cycle, government execution will be progressively extended, as the Government's capacity to manage development, including external cooperation, is enhanced. If necessary, UNDP support will be provided for this purpose. The United Nations specialized agencies should be encouraged to continue to play key roles in their respective areas of expertise, by assisting in the strategy formulation process, by participating in programme assessment and evaluation and by implementing specific components of the programme.

14. The country programme will be implemented, monitored and reviewed from a programme perspective in order to ensure maximum coherence in support of national objectives. For each area of concentration, a central management team, comprising government officials, chief technical advisers of projects, experts, national advisers and UNDP officers, will be established and periodic comprehensive reviews will be conducted. The programme section of the UNDP field office has been reorganized accordingly into programme units in line with UNDP areas of intervention.

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15. The programme will consider the use of such specific mechanisms as the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) and United Nations International Short-term Advisory Resources (UNISTAR), as well as recourse to the technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) modality, and will continue expanding the services of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) specialists. UNDP also intends to rely increasingly on national expertise. To this end, a data base on existing national consultancy services is being established.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

16. The areas of concentration of UNDP's cooperation fit within the major axes of the Government's development strategy and correspond to the recommendations of Governing Council decision 90/34. The Administrator recommends, therefore, that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for the Gambia.
